

Message Text

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43

ACTION SCSE-00

INFO OCT-01 ARA-10 ISO-00 SCA-01 L-03 H-02 FBIE-00 DHA-02

NSC-05 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /024 W
----- 121176

O R 251545 AUG 76

FM AMCONSUL MAZATLAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0867

INFO AMEMBASSY MEXICO

UNCLAS MAZATLAN 0353

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: CASC, MX

SUBJ: W/W POSSIBLE PRISONER HUNGER STRIKE

1. DURING CONSUL'S AUGUST 24 PRISON VISIT MAZATLAN, ONE PRISONER MENTIONED CIRCULATION OF LETTER WHICH CALLED FOR HUNGER STRIKE OF AMERICAN PRISONERS, ALL MEXICAN PRISONS, TO BEGIN SEPTEMBER 7, TO FOCUS ATTENTION AND HASTEN ACTION ON PENDING NEGOTIATIONS FOR PRISONER EXCHANGE.

2. SUBSEQUENT INTERVIEW WITH PRISONER WHO RECEIVED THE LETTER REVEALED THE FOLLOWING: UNSIGNED LETTER WAS ENCLOSED IN MEXICO CITY HOTEL ENVELOPE BUT WAS DATELINED AUGUST 17, 1976, TORRENCE CALIFORNIA. BODY OF LETTER ALTHOUGH UNSIGNED, INDICATED THAT SENDER WAS FORMER PRISONER IN LECUMBERRI IN 1974, AND AT THAT TIME WAS INVOLVED IN HUNGER STRIKE. PRISONER WHO RECIVED LETTER STATED HE DOES NOT KNOW IDENTITY OF WRITER. HE SAID THAT LETTER EXHORTED ALL AMERICAN PRISONERS TO JOIN HUNGER STRIKE PLANNED FOR SEPTEMBER 7. LETTER STATED IF NO ACTION ON PRISONER EXCHANGE ISSUE BY SEPTEMBER 15, STRIKE WOULD CONTINUE UP TO FORTY-FIVE DAYS. HE SAID THAT LETTER STATED THAT DEATH MIGHT BE THE ULTIMATE END FOR SOME PARTICIPANTS AND THAT IF PRISONERS PLAN TO JOIN THE EFFORT THEY MUST PLAN TO GO THE LIMIT. THE RECEIPIENT OF THE LETTER STATED THAT SO FAR ONLY SIX PRISONERS OUT OF 48 IN THE MAZATLAN JAIL HAD DECLINED TO JOIN THE STRIKE.

3. ATTEMPTS TO GET A COPY OF THE LETTER TODAY WERE UNSUCCESSFUL
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BECAUSE OF ROLL CALL, BUT PRISONER PROMISED TO PRODUCE LETTER
FOR CONSUL AUGUST 25. WILL POUCH IMMEDIATELY UPON RECEIPT.

4. CONSUL TOLD PRISONER THAT SHE FELT THAT PRISONERS WERE
JUMPING GUN IN EXPECTING ACTION ON PRISONER EXCHANGE AT THIS
EARLY STAGE, THAT SUFFICIENT TIME HAD NOT ELAPSED FOR EVEN
PRELIMINARY NEGOTIATIONS, AND THAT PATIENCE AND RESTRAINT
SHOULD BE THE WATCHWORDS, AS THE CAUSE WOULD BE ILL-SERVED
AND COULD BE WRECKED BY A HUNGER STRIKE AT THIS TIME.

5. CONSUL HAS NO WAY TO DETERMINE WHETHER SENDER OF LETTER
IS SINCERE OR VENGEFUL FOR PAST GRIEVANCES BUT, OF COURSE,
CANNOT AFFORD ASSUME NOT SERIOUS. IT WOULD APPEAR THAT SOME
PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT AS TO WHAT HAS TRANSPIRED WITH RESPECT
TO PRISONER SANCTION DISCUSSIONS, WITH TIMING ELEMENT MENTIONED
IF POSSIBLE, MIGHT SERVE TO ABATE OR CANCEL THIS IMPENDING
HUMGER STRIKE.
MATTHEWS

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NNN

*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a

*** Current Classification *** UNCLASSIFIED

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